

## GUEST EDITORIAL

## Park City wind power challenge

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We applaud Mayor Dana Williams and Park City for taking on Utah Power's "Blue Sky Community Challenge!" Park City is purchasing clean, renewable wind energy to cover 7.5 percent of its total electricity use, and it is challenging others in the community to follow its lead. While the purchase of wind power will cost the city a little more, Park City's plans are destined to pay off — both for the environment and the city's bottom line.

Wind power is a natural for Park City. Its world-renown ski and outdoor industries rely on its scenic beauty and pristine natural resources, and it is easy to forget that Utah's growing demands for energy could threaten the quality of "the greatest snow on earth." The city has two lofty goals that it hopes to achieve by Earth Day 2004. The first is to increase city residential and business participation in the Blue Sky program to five percent of all Utah Power customers (about 435 users). The second is to increase wind energy use throughout the community to two percent of Park City's total monthly usage.

Deer Valley, Park City Mountain Resort, and The Canyons are to be commended for announcing their intent to buy wind power and meet the city's challenge.

Subscribers of Utah Power's Blue Sky program pay \$1.95 for each block of 100 kilowatt-hours of wind energy that are added to the power supply grid each month. This premium goes directly to fund the construction of wind parks, and Utah Power is hoping to add five to 10 megawatts of wind power capacity in Utah to support local Blue Sky

participants. Because Park City will be buying 363 blocks of wind power to account for 7.5 percent of its energy use, the program will cost about \$8,500 annually.

The city intends to cover this cost, however, by auditing its energy use in buildings, appliances, lights and other fixtures to identify ways to run the city more energy efficiently. For example, replacing energy-guzzling appliances and incandescent lights with modern Energy Star-certified fixtures and compact fluorescent bulbs will reduce energy use significantly. In fact, when Salt Lake City combined its wind purchases with similar energy efficiency initiatives, the city saved money! Park City can expect the same.

Why should others in Park City follow its lead? For businesses, combining Blue Sky wind purchases with energy efficiency could result in similar bottom line benefits as well.

Moreover, communicating publicly their involvement with Blue Sky can enhance their public images among environmentally-aware tourists who come to experience Park City's famous powder and picturesque wonders. For homeowners, participation in Blue Sky for less than the price of a cup of coffee each month is an investment in clean air and helps build a cleaner energy infrastructure for future generations.

Wind power is the fastest growing energy source in the world. Park City's Blue Sky Challenge is helping to foster that growth in the Intermountain West, and it sends a clear message that Utahns want clean, renewable energy to help secure their future.

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